

William Henry Harrison Doll Collection

S364

1861-1892

2 folders and 1box

Manuscripts & Rare Books Division
Indiana State Library

Finding Aid by: Nikki Stoddard Schofield, March 2014

Biographical Note:

William Henry Harrison Doll was born on August 14, 1844, in Moores Hill, Dearborn County, Indiana. David Doll, his father who named him, was an ardent Whig and admirer of General Harrison. William's mother was Hester Ann Smullen. In 1850, David was 30 years old; Hester was 29; and their three children were: William, age 6; Lydia A., age 4; and Sarah D., age 1. The main business in Moores Hill was making barrels for whiskey and pork packing. In March 1853, when William was eight, his family moved to Jennings County where David Doll owned 80 acres and engaged in farming.

Joining the Sixth Indiana Regiment at North Madison for three years' service, William recorded the regiment's history from August 25, 1861 until the Battle of Shiloh on April 7, 1862.

In a separate ledger book, William recorded his memories beginning with his birth on August 14, 1844 until April 1865 when the Civil War ended. He wrote his reminiscences in 1874 at Columbus, Indiana, and revised the manuscript in 1892 in Indianapolis.

William married Laura Keepers, and had at least two children: Chester W., born in 1874 or 1875; and Daisey M., born about 1883. William died March 5, 1904 in Columbus, Indiana.

Source:

Information Found within Collection and Ancestry.com accessed 3/13/2014.

Scope and Content:

In folder 1 of 3 is the regimental history for the Sixth Indiana, which fills thirty pages in a blank book. On page 18, William wrote: "While in camp at Bacon Creek the members of our brass band in a drunken spree destroyed their instruments by washing them out of all semblance to their former shapes, and we were without a brass band for several weeks as the instruments belonged to the men." However, the soldiers raised money and new instruments were purchased.

On pages 28-29, William told of "a laughable incident" when the men were called out early in the morning when gun fire was heard. "Officers rushed out of their quarters

crying fall in company, fall in, soon the men came rolling out of the tents dressing as they ran. Some were in shirt sleeves. Some bare footed, some without hats, but every man had his gun and equipment, at the first fire. Gen. Rousseau rushed out of his tent in shirt and drawers, ran to a drummer's tent nearby, jerked him and ordered him to beat the long roll, vigorously swearing at him to be quick about it." The men were ready in two minutes, but were soon dismissed because the firing had ceased.

Folder 2 of 3 contained the biography and reminiscences of William Doll, which were photocopied from pages 1 to 157 of the original ledger book, which is in a box labeled 3 of 3.

From pages 135 to 138, William wrote about Union General Jefferson Columbus Davis from Indiana. On the second day after their unit's arrival at Louisville, Kentucky, "a fearful tragedy was enacted the Galt House Hotel. General [William "Bull"] Nelson who had been in command of the troops in and around Louisville met Gen. Jeff C. Davis, a Division Commander in McCooks Corp in the office of the Hotel. They had some controversy regarding some troops which Gen. Davis had reported to Nelson which ended in Nelson pouring a torrent of abuse and vile epithets upon Davis, and then striking Davis in the face with such force as to leave the imprint of his fingers upon Davis' face." Starting a new paragraph on page 136, William continued: "Gen. Nelson was a blustering punctilious tyrannical military despot, he was an officer of the regular Army, and had served in the Navy as Commander, he tried to introduce the rigid discipline of the regular Navy among the Volunteer land troops and was heartily hated by all the troops of his command, he was a large portly man weighing over 200 pounds while Gen. Davis was a small man not weighing over 125 pounds. After striking Davis, Nelson turned away and started up the stairway to go to his room. Gen. Davis asked an officer near him the loan of a revolver, and one was handed him. He called to Gen. Nelson and told him to defend himself, presented the pistol at him and fired, the ball entering the left breast near the heart. Nelson fell on the stairway and lived but a few minutes." Jeff Davis gave himself up. On page 137, William explained that General Davis was "a great favorite" and when the soldiers heard the news that he could be court-martialed and shot, "the entire corps put themselves under arms with the intention of releasing him." Governor Morton assured the men that a court martial "was only a form to comply with military law, and Gen. Davis would not suffer ... any severe punishment." Thus, in a few days, Jeff Davis was released and returned to command.

At the Battle of Stones River, William was taken prisoner (page 157). From Murfreesboro, William went to Chattanooga and other places by train, until, eventually, he arrived at Richmond on January 19, 1863, and was incarcerated in Libby Prison (page 175).

On page 178, there is a newspaper ad for the reconstructed Libby Prison in Chicago, which William's comment: "When in Chicago accompanied by my son Chester W. Doll on August 16, 1892, I visited the old Libby Prison as restored there, and was very much interested in viewing the magnificent museum it now contains."

On page 211, Williams give statistics of Andersonville Prison from February 1864 to March 1865.

On page 242, William tells about being shot by “a large Minnie ball of more than an ounce weight,” which disabled him. Eight days after being wounded, a surgeon “extracted the troublesome ball. The operation was so skillfully performed that after it had healed it did not contract the muscular tissues to any perceivable extent, although I was quite lame and I could not walk without limping for months and even yet after a period of 30 years – 1893 – it often pains me a great deal, especially if I attempt walking any distance.” (Page 245)

The narrative portion of the ledger ends at page 271. From pages 272 through 290, William Doll compiled an appendix with tables “regarding the field of operations of the Regiment, Battles, eight campaigns, the original organization of the field and company officers, together with my own travels both with and separate from my company, also cities, states, mountains, rivers, etc. through which I passed.”

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Collection Inventory Folder and Item Listing:

Folder 1. 6th Indiana Volunteer Infantry 1861-1862 (30 pages)

Date	
1861	Pages 1 to 17
1862	Pages 17 to 30

Folder 2. Reminiscences and Biography (photocopy of first 157 pages)

Date	
1844-1892	Introduction (pages 1-3; there is no page 4)
1853-1860	Chapter I (pages 5-12)
1860-1861	Chapter II (pages 13-24)
1861	Chapter III (pages 25-51)
1861-1862	Chapter IV (pages 52-68)
March-April 1862	Chapter V (pages 69-76)
May 1862	Chapter VI (pages 77-90)
n.d.	Chapter VI (erroneous duplicate of number)(pages 91-105)

June-Oct. 1862	Chapter VII (pages 105-141A)
Nov. 1862	Chapter VIII (pages 142-157)

Folder 3. Reminiscences and Biography (original ledger book (290 pages)

Date	
1844-1892	Same as Folder 2 above for Introduction and Chapters I-VIII (pages 1-157)
Dec. 1862- Jan. 1863	Chapter IX (pages 158-178)
Jan. 1863	Chapter 10 (changed from Roman numerals to standard numbers) (pages 179-220)
Jan.-Sept. 1863	Chapter 11 (pages 221-249)
Oct. 1863 - May 1864	Chapter 12 (pages 250-261)
June 1864 – April 1865	Chapter 13 (pages 261-271)
1862-1864	Original Roster of Regimental & Co. Officers (pages 272-273)
1862-1864	Summary of soldiers in 6 th Reg.; Battles fought by date (pages 274-276)
n.d	Distances traveled (pages 277-279)
n.d.	Indiana Regiments and Batteries at battles (pages 280-281)
n.d.	Engagements in which Indiana troops fought in other states (page 282)
n.d.	150 regiments from Indiana (pages 283-284)
n.d.	Death rate of soldiers (page 285)
n.d.	Photos of historic sites (pages 285-290)

Collection Information:

Size of Collection:	2 folders and 1 box
Collection Dates:	1861-1892
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